

THE
SABBATH SCHOOL VISITANT.

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SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

THIS meeting is rapidly growing in importance and usefulness. Some of our neighboring societies have engaged in it with becoming zeal, and we trust it will prove a great blessing to the cause of Sabbath Schools. For more than three years, has the second Monday evening in every month, been devoted by the "Utica Union" to this object. The meetings have had a happy and powerful effect upon the teachers who have attended, and the present prosperity of the school is to be attributed in a high degree, to their influence.

The last meeting, which was held on the 8th inst. was attended by an unusual number. The circumstance of its being a *Concert*, seems to have given it a more general interest than has heretofore been realized. The members spoke their sentiments with freedom, and the meeting was highly interesting and instructive.

A Teacher rose and made some remarks on the influence which the Sabbath School is exerting on society, and which will probably be extending itself through future generations, down to the end of time. He said it had been estimated, by one who had deeply entered into the spirit of the subject, that we might, on an average, calculate, that the influence of every child we instruct, will be more or less felt continually through life, upon at least twenty persons. Every child has an influence upon his companions; as he grows up towards manhood, his influence is extended and increased; in riper years he may be the head of a family, and perhaps be capable of giving a moral tone to a whole community. If, in these several relations of life, his conduct is such as the gospel approves, how happy and lasting may be his influence! His children will rise up and call him blessed. The society in which he moved, may hallow the remembrance of his virtues, and his children's children, to his latest posterity, may have reason to bless the Lord for such a gracious progenitor. These considerations, said the speaker, have an important relation to our sacred employment. Under our influence, characters are forming for time—for immortality; and it is useful for us often to look through the catalogue of years to come, and anticipate the important bearing which our present labors in this humble sphere may be destined to have upon events of the highest consequence to mankind. We may derive encouragement from the thought, and it will make us feel more deeply our high responsibility.

Another then spoke. He dwelt particularly upon the *immediate* influence of the teachers upon their classes, and upon one another. If they were earnest in giving instruction, and should give it in a pleasing manner, their pupils would soon be earnest to receive it. If they were punctual and attentive to the duties of the school, their pupils would commonly be so too; and on the contrary, if they

were dilatory and careless, their pupils would usually manifest the same disposition. He spoke of the importance of there being a fair understanding between a teacher and his class, upon every subject of duty, or of discipline; and recommended, that when a teacher was necessarily detained from school, he should improve the first opportunity in explaining to his pupils the reasons of his absence. This, said he, will tend to convince them, that they are ever held in remembrance, by one who loves them: it will make them more affectionate and more obedient. He also mentioned the fact, that had been ascertained by a respectable clergyman at the South, that of six hundred young men who were preparing for the gospel ministry, three-fifths of the number had been taken from the Sabbath Schools. And that of the same number of criminals in the prisons which he had visited, not one had ever enjoyed the benefits of Sabbath School instruction. The speaker expressed his pleasure at being permitted the privilege of engaging in this labor of Christian love. We may here said he, be sitting in motion wheels of benevolence, which shall continue rolling onward, with a resistless and renovating influence, to the very end of all things.

Another Teacher then related some interesting particulars, of a Sunday School in the City Prison of Dublin. It was commenced under great discouragements; but by the Divine blessing, had proved successful in reforming many of the most hardened criminals.

Another then followed, and exhibited the effects of the Sabbath School, by comparing the youth of our village, at this time, with what they were only six years since. The comparison is striking to every observer, and happily evinces the utility of the institution.

One who had before spoken, now rose again, and mentioned the interesting fact, that from the Sabbath Schools in the City of New-York, during the last seven years, ONE THOUSAND teachers and learners had made a public profession of their faith in Christ. With intelligence like this, said he, we may well be encouraged. Let us pursue our labors with increasing earnestness, and hope and pray for the same rich blessing to attend them. He also mentioned, that in a revival in N. York, some time since, out of one hundred converts, NINE-
TY-EIGHT were at the time, or had been, members of the Sabbath School. In another revival in the same place, out of thirty-five, TWENTY-SEVEN were from the Sabbath School. And at another time, a WHOLE SCHOOL, comprising the number of thirty scholars, had become hopefully pious, and all, except one, united with a church.

Another then rose, to express, in conclusion, his pleasure at the warm cordiality of feeling, which appeared to have pervaded the hearts of all who were present. He reminded us of that interesting beauty in our system—its being strictly a union, and exhorted us to cherish in our hearts, on all occasions, a spirit of unity and love.

SABBATH SCHOOL REVIVAL.

From the Rev. Mr. Camp, of Lowville, Lewis County, we have received some interesting particulars respecting the Sabbath School in that place. He states, "that it has been in existence five summers. The whole number of scholars who have attended during that period, has been one hundred and ninety-five: never more than fifty, and

seldom over forty at a time. At present FIFTY-ONE of them are hopefully pious; *forty-five* of whom have become so within the past season. There have been, since the school was established, nine different teachers; all of whom are now professors of religion. The effects of this revival, were very powerful and salutary. While the school was holden during the interval of divine service, the church were engaged in solemn prayer for a blessing. The teachers often met for the same object. And such was the effect produced, by the Holy Spirit, that at one time a teacher came to me, and exclaimed, "O pray for me! the whole of my class are anxious for their souls."

SABBATH SCHOOL GOVERNMENT—Continued.

IN continuation of this subject, we remark, *Secondly*, that PUNCTUALITY in attendance should be required of every scholar. This is emphatically, in Sabbath School concerns, "*the soul of business.*" It will gladden the teacher's heart, and encourage him to faithfulness, to find his little charge early collecting themselves around him. And attentiveness on his part, will, in most cases, easily secure this. LET HIM SET THE EXAMPLE. Example with children is every thing. He should by no means, if possible to prevent it, be absent, for a single time, at the opening of the school. He should rise early on the Lord's day, and prepare himself in season for its duties: Nor even permit the *unreadiness of the breakfast table* to detain him beyond the appointed hour. And if, notwithstanding his example, his pupils are still unmindful of his requirements, let him visit their parents on the subject,—convince them of his deep interest in their children's welfare, and urge upon them the importance of punctuality. And if none of these means prove effectual, (which will seldom be the case,) let his own judgment dictate some other course, better suited to the particular occasion.

Thirdly: Of every scholar who recites from the scriptures, a certain number of verses should be required for every sabbath. Their progress will in this way be rendered SURE. The lessons may be small or large, in proportion to the capability and leisure of the scholar; but they should by no means be larger than he can easily commit, or even than it is probable he *will* commit; for what we cannot do easily, we commonly feel quite disinclined to attempt; and on the contrary, an easy task is performed with pleasure. This course has been tried, and found highly useful. If a scholar is able to learn twenty verses in a week, but has only TEN given him for a lesson, and the teacher is strict in requiring of him the stated number, it will soon be found, not only that his lesson is committed without difficulty, but, in most cases, that he has, at the end of the quarter, recited a greater number of verses, than could otherwise have been compelled from him. Teachers in general are too anxious to have their pupils recite *long* lessons; but let them try the plan of giving them *short* ones, and having them uniformly committed, and they will find their own labors less burdensome,—their pupils better satisfied,—and the GREAT OBJECT of the Sabbath School more surely and easily attained. The lessons should also be committed during the week, and recited at the opening of the school.

PARMELE'S QUESTIONS.

Questions on the Historical Parts of the New Testament, for the use of Sabbath Schools, by T. Parmele.—(See cover.)

It is often objected to the use of printed questions on Bible history, that none can be as interesting and useful to the learner, as those which may occur to the teacher in giving instruction upon the lesson. Now we are not disposed to contradict this sentiment; yet as an objection we would oppose it. It is true, that by the experienced teacher, the questions can be better supplied from his own mind, than from any printed system. We will go still farther, and say, that to such a teacher, the printed questions are only an encumbrance. But how often do we find such teachers? We look abroad in the world, throughout the sphere of Sabbath School operations, and find engaged in the benevolent enterprise, all classes of the Christian community. We find, too, that a great majority of all who are engaged as teachers, are, in point of intellectual attainments, of an ordinary or inferior kind; that they need many assistances which are useless to the more competent, and many instructions which the more experienced only can give. Now it is for such, principally, that printed questions are intended; and the point here is, whether we shall have *them* or *none*: for the greater part of teachers either cannot, or will not, frame questions for themselves. The catechetical mode of instruction, therefore,—to the merits of which the experience of ages bears testimony,—is entirely lost; and the children are left to pursue their studies, unquestioned upon them by the teacher, as well as too often uninstructed.

On this subject we wish to be clear and explicit. The objection which we combat, however, is neither a common or a dangerous one: yet it is frequently urged against the use of a printed system. We once so urged it ourselves, and, through a sincere desire of doing good, firmly contested our present opinion. But a wider range of observation has, we trust, led us nearer to the truth, and at length fully convinced us, not of the unsoundness of the *sentiment*, but of the invalidity of the *objection*.

The system of questions recently published by the Superintendent of the Utica Union Sabbath School, is in our opinion well worthy the attention of the public. The simplicity of the plan, renders it easy to the humblest capacity, and only a direct answer to each question is required, to pursue the history in all its detail, as recorded by the Evangelists. Yet there is an imperfection in the work; and we would mention it, in the hope of its being amended in some future edition. It is, the still too limited extent of the questions; and although it appears to have been the intention of the author, to have had many more supplied by the teacher himself,—agreeably to his example in the three first chapters of Matthew,—yet he may be sure, that those who need the assistance of printed questions, will never supply the deficiency.

On the whole, however, we are happy to recommend this little work to the use of all who are engaged in Sabbath Schools. It originated in the wants of the Utica Union, and has there been found highly useful.

INCREASING PROSPERITY OF THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

We take the following from a little work, entitled, "An Appeal in favor of Sabbath Schools," compiled by William Drown.

Who, that considers the nature and tendencies of the Sunday School system; the high ascendancy it has gained in the land that gave it birth, or the effects it has produced during a period of little more than 40 years, and that knows the characteristic of the age in which we live, will doubt whether the object of this institution shall meet patronage? Or who, that has traced the progress of this system from Gloucester, where it was established by the venerable Raikes, to every city and village of Great Britain, to the principal places in the neighboring islands, to the continent of Europe, to Africa and India, to the West Indies, Nova Scotia, Canada, and some of the most interior regions of the United States, I say who, that considers its progress, will doubt whether it rests upon a solid basis, or shares the approbation and confidence of every enlightened community?

Thus widely and rapidly, to the present time, has this institution multiplied its funds, its objects, and its conquests. It is scarcely possible even to hazard a conjecture upon the number of children and adults which are, every sabbath, brought under the sound of instruction throughout the world. Perhaps if they were stated at a *million and a half*, it would not at all exceed the aggregate. And allowing one teacher to every 15 scholars, will make the great number of *one hundred and fifty thousand teachers*. What a reflection for the moralist and the christian, the patriot and the philanthropist! What a wide and lovely scene for an enlightened and generous imagination to range over! A million and a half of scholars, with a hundred and fifty thousand teachers, collected around the fountain of celestial truth, to cleanse from the eyes of their understanding the scales of ignorance and vice!!! The most of this has been accomplished within the recollection of many of us. Contracted must be the mind, and cold the heart, that can find nothing here to awaken its raptures. If there be a window in heaven from which the blessed inhabitants may look upon this lower world; or, if a door be opened through which the spirits of the just, made perfect, are ever permitted to visit the scenes of their terrestrial labors; O who can conceive the ecstasies with which the souls of faithful and departed saints must hover around the captivating scene! What a mighty reflux of delight must roll back from the tide of their benevolence, and reach them even upon the heavenly side of the shores of eternity! What accession must be continually made to their bliss, while another and another soul is continually arriving in the realms of glory, to tell its inhabitants they were converted to God, under their labors in a Sunday School! But here conjecture fails us.

If we turn from the past to the future, our hopes leave even our success behind. Comparatively but few years shall pass before other writers will look back from a distance, in the progress of the Sunday School institution, inconceivable to us, and sum up all that is here recorded, as but the very commencement of its operations, the first fruits of its victories, and as not worthy to extend beyond the first page of its history.

DIALOGUE FOR CHILDREN—FROM THE GUARDIAN.

Mrs. D. has two little girls, of whom she is very fond. One is about six, and the other three years of age. She loves them because they are her own little girls, and because they possess immortal souls which are worth more than all the gold and silver in the world. She loves to see them dressed neat and clean; but above all, she delights to instruct them—to teach them to be good—to learn them their catechism, and how to keep God's commandments. Whenever her mind is disengaged from family cares, she holds conversation with them about their work—their books—sometimes, yea very often, about dying—the next world—and about their duties to God—their own souls—their fellow creatures, and especially the heathen, who sit in darkness. One day as she was sweeping her room, her youngest little girl, whose name is Harriet, spoke very pleasantly to her Ma, and said, Ma, Pa gave me two cents the other day, and I found one last week—now what shall I do with them, Ma? what shall I buy; and my silver pieces that my uncle gave me; what shall I do with all my money?

Mrs. D. My little dear, I am glad you asked that question: I think I would not buy any thing with my money; for you have every thing you need for your comfort—you have clothes to wear, victuals to eat, a house to live in, a good warm bed to sleep in, and sometimes you have oranges and raisins sent to you; and you have a very pretty little doll. I think I would be very choice of my money, and lay by every cent I could get.

Harriet. For what, Ma? If I can't buy things with it, what is it good for?

Mrs. D. It is good for the heathen—it is the very thing that good people are trying to get to use for them.

Harriet. The heathen, Ma; what is the heathen?

Mrs. D. I will leave my sweeping, my little precious one, and tell about them. The heathen are people who do not know any thing about God, or Jesus Christ.

Harriet. Where do they live?

Mrs. D. They live in Asia, Africa, South America, North America, and indeed all over the world. When you are large enough to study Geography, you will know where these places are.

Harriet. Ma, won't you tell me more about them.

Mrs. D. I intend to, my dear: I would not fail of it for any thing. Ma is very sorry for them; and she is sorry for their children.

Harriet. What ails the children that makes you sorry for them?

Mrs. D. They are not sick, as Ma knows of—they are I suppose as well as other children; and for ought I know they are handsome: and I dare say, some of them are very pretty. But they don't know any thing about God and Jesus Christ. Many of them have no pa nor ma to teach them their catechism; for when their father dies, their mother is laid on a pile of wood with their dead father, and both are burnt up together; then the little children are left alone—have not any body to take care of them—they go about the streets—get all ragged—they have no schools to go to—nobody to learn them to read or work—nobody to feel sorry for them—and nobody

to kiss them when they fall down and hurt them. They are poor little children.

Harriet. I feel as though I wanted to cry. I wish they would come here; I would give them one of my frocks, and they should have some of my bread and butter.

Mrs. D. They cannot come here; they live a great way off.

Harriet. Wont you let me go and see them? I'll carry them something.

Mrs. D. You cannot go there now; you are a little girl, and if you should live, it will be a great many years before you will be a young lady. But I'll tell you what you can do; you can give your money to employ missionaries to go.

Harriet. What are missionaries, ma?

Mrs. D. Missionaries are men that go there to preach the Bible to them. They go into the streets and take little children home with them—put clothes on them—learn them to work, and to say their prayers—and keep school for them.

Harriet. I wish I could go there, ma; I would sit close by them, and they should have my new spelling book.

Mrs. D. I am pleased to see you feel for them, and desire to do them good; but I don't see how you can, unless you send them your cents; for unless there is money sent them to buy things with, they must come home and leave the poor children to go back into the streets again.

Harriet. I think cents are very pretty, and my silver pieces are pretty; but I believe I will send them—the missionaries may have them—and I guess I shall get more some how or other. When uncle James comes from Boston, I hope he will give me more.

Mrs. D. I will tell you to-morrow how you can get more. I know of a great many ways how little girls can get money.

Harriet. I will ask you to-morrow. I am glad you told me about the children. I shall think about them all the time I am playing with my doll. My doll has better clothes than they have—poor little children—no pa—no ma. Ma, I am glad I have you—I am glad pa is my pa.



SABBATH SCHOOL GLEANINGS—For the Visitant.

FROM A SUPERINTENDENT.

Just after entering the school, a few Sabbaths since, a little boy, about six years of age, came and asked me for the charity box. I asked him what he wanted of it. "I want to put a cent into it," said he. In order to examine his motives and his knowledge of divine things more particularly, I asked him what good he supposed it would do to put his money into the charity box. "I want to send it to the heathen," he replied. "Do you know," said I, "who the heathen are?"—"They are folks who haven't got any Bible, and live a great way off." "What is the bible?"—"The word of God." "What use would it be to the heathen, if they had it?"—"It would tell them how to love God and be good." "Where did the bible come from?"—"From heaven." "Was it written in heaven?"—"No—the Prophets and good men wrote it." "If good men wrote it, how then is it the word of God, and come from heaven?"—"Why,

the Holy Ghost told them how to write it." "Did they see the Holy Ghost, and did he speak to them?"—"No—but he made them *think it*."

This was enough. I presented him the charity box—he dropt in his money—a smile of joy glowed upon his countenance—and he returned to his seat, filled with "the luxury of doing good."

FROM A TEACHER.

I WAS telling my dear pupils of the duty of prayer—of its pleasing the Savior to hear them pray, and how ready he is to give them the good things for which they ask him. "Amos" said I, "do you think the Lord loves to hear children pray?" "Yes sir," said he, "there once a man—he was a wicked man, and used to swear, and get drunk, and rob people—he had two little girls, who went to the Sunday School—they were good little girls, and were sorry their father was so wicked, and they thought they would try to pray for him:—so one night, when he was going out to rob somebody, they took their bible, and went somewhere alone and prayed to God, that he would make their father a good man—and their father didn't go out that night—and every day the little girls used to pray for him—and pretty soon the Lord made him to be a good man—and he didn't swear nor rob any more.

This little story, told in such a simple manner, touched my heart. It drew out my feelings more affectionately towards the dear objects of my care, and encouraged me to hope that the Lord would water with his grace the good seed that was sown.

MARY AND HER BIBLE.

LITTLE MARY WAS a lovely girl. She was very attentive to her duties in the Sabbath School, and always endeavoured to please her teacher, who loved her with the warmest love. She was kind to her playmates and companions, dutiful and affectionate to her parents, and desirous of doing good to all. Her teacher wishing to reward her for her goodness, and to give her something that would be useful to her, made her a present of a handsome bible.—"Here, Mary," said she, "take this Bible—read it, and pray over it—do what it tells you—and the Lord will bless you." She took the Bible home, and showed it to her father, who was a pious man,—"Father," said she, "my teacher gave me this."—"Indeed! my child," said her father, "I am glad for you; and what did your teacher tell you to do with it?" "She told me, to read it, and *pray over it*."—"And do you intend to pray over it, my dear?" "Yes, father," said she, and immediately knelt down by his side, with the Bible in her hands, and prayed, "that God would make that Bible tell her how to be good, and be prepared for heaven." "O," said her mother, "it was an interesting sight," and soon her prayer was answered. By attentively reading this precious book, the Saviour was pleased to draw her soul to himself, and little Mary is now numbered with his most faithful followers.

I ASKED a Sunday School teacher, if he expected to continue his efforts of that kind during life: "Certainly," said he, "unless Satan's kingdom is destroyed first;—*I have enlisted during the war.*"—[*Tel.*